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ANNUAL ESTIMATED REPLACEMENT FARMER OPPORTUNITIES IN NEBRASKA.

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AN ESTIMATE OF ANNUAL FARMER REPLACEMENT NEEDS IN THE 93 COUNTIES OF NEBRASKA WAS COMPUTED BY A FORMULA DEVELOPED BY CLARENCE BUNDY AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY AND APPLIED TO CENSUS DATA. THE FORMULA WAS USED TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF FARMER RETIREMENTS, OR FARMERS LEAVING FARMING, AND FARM CONSOLIDATION RATES. ACCORDING TO THE ESTIMATES, 951 FARMING OPPORTUNITIES WOULD BE AVAILABLE ANNUALLY TO 34.9 PERCENT OF THE ESTIMATED 2,725 17-YEAR-OLD RURAL MALES IN NEBRASKA IN 1969. FARMING OPPORTUNITIES ESTIMATES RANGED FROM 31.4 PERCENT IN KNOX COUNTY TO 18.0 PERCENT IN DOUGLAS COUNTY WITH AN AVERAGE OF 10.2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR EACH OF THE COUNTIES. THE GREATEST NEED FOR REPLACEMENTS EXISTED IN THE EASTERN AND CENTRAL SECTIONS OF THE STATE. (JM)

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951 REPLACEMENT FARMER OPPORTUNITIES IN NEBRASKA ANNUALLY

A comprehensive study of annual farmer replacement needs for Nebraska and for each of the 93 counties has just been completed at the University of Nebraska. Douglas Genereux, graduate assistant in Agricultural Education reports that there are an estimated 951 opportunities for young men to go into farming annually. This figure represents 34.9 per cent of the 2725 seventeen-year-old rural males estimated for Nebraska in 1969.

The underlying reasons for conducting this study were: (1) previous estimates of farming opportunities have been made on the national or regional bases which may not have reflected the Nebraska situation accurately; (2) in doing local or state educational planning with any degree of accuracy, it is necessary to know just what replacement farmer opportunities are available now, and how many can be expected to open within the planning period 1964 to 1969. It was, therefore, believed that a study which would provide accurate information concerning farming opportunities was necessary.

The major emphasis of this study was placed upon the rate of farm consolidation and farmer retirement. Professor Clarence Bundy of Iowa State University designed a formula and conducted a study in Iowa which reflected the above trends at the county level. It was concluded that Professor Bundy's formula could be applied to Nebraska. This formula is based on available United States Population Census and United States Census of Agriculture data. Genereux is quick to point out that the formula produces estimates that reflect on census trends.

Several assumptions were made prior to conducting this investigation: (1) farmers, like other workers, tend to retire at age 65, making all or part of their farm units available to other farmers; (2) the projected farm consolidation rate can be based on the trend of the past five years; and (3) farmers under 55 years of age tend to leave the farm for reasons other than retirement at a rate of 1.5 per cent annually.

Midwest Agribusiness, prepared by Midwest Association of State Departments of Agriculture, October, 1966, reports that 44 per cent

of Nebraska's 550,000 man labor force are employed in production agriculture and agribusiness occupations. Of this 44 per cent (242,000 workers), 127,000 were employed in production agriculture (17,000 hired farm workers, and 110,000 family farm workers), while 115,000 were employed in non-farm agribusiness. These statewide figures suggest that production agriculture is one of the higher opportunity areas in Nebraska and includes only a part of the total occupational opportunities in agriculture. The "related" or "off-farm" agricultural occupations are becoming increasingly more important as a segment of Nebraska economy. The lack of qualified personnel in this area may become even greater, and the agricultural skills and competencies needed may become more complex in the future.

Census figures show that in Nebraska there were 100,846 farms in 1954; 90,475 farms in 1959; and 80,163 farms in 1964. Projecting from the individual county totals, farm numbers should decrease by just over 1800 farms each year. This would leave 71,145 farms in 1969.

New opportunities in farming develop from the death and retirement of farmers who are over 65 years of age and from the movement of farm operators under 55 years of age who will leave the farm to take up other employment. This exodus may be caused by health, dissatisfaction, finances, or many other reasons. In order to find the estimated number of farmer replacement opportunities for each county, the annual decline in farm numbers for the county was subtracted from the estimated number of all farmers leaving the farm each year. The state figure of an estimated 951 farmer replacement opportunities was determined by totaling the county figures. As can be seen from the accompanying table, these opportunities range from a high of an estimated 31.4 in Knox county to an estimated low of -18.0 in Douglas county. The average is 10.2 opportunities per county per year.

In McPherson county, for example, the data show an estimated 142 per cent of the rural seventeen-year-old males might find opportunities. This indicates there are more opportunities than available young men. In Pierce county 65.6 per cent may be needed while in Holt county the comparable figure is 23.5 per cent.

The study indicates the greatest need for replacement farmers is found in the eastern and central Nebraska. This may be the result of more intensive operations in general farming and livestock feeding. Because of larger farms in western Nebraska, a smaller need for replacement farmers is shown in these counties.

If we are to maintain our economy and increase our efficiency, it will be necassary to provide replacement personnel in areas of specific employment need. For this reason it is necessary that studies be made in all areas of employment to determine the need and to make certain that there are educational programs that will provide the man-power for the positions.

It is anticipated there will be reports in other employment areas as studies are funded and conducted.

County	Estimated Number of Farms in 1969	Estimated Number of Farmer Replacement Opportunities Annually	Persent of 17 year-old Rural Males for whom opportunities may exist
ADAMS	925	13	45.6
ANTELOPE	1246	18	36.9
ARTHUR	84	1	50.0
BANNER	186	2	17.0
BLAINE	133	4	121.2
BOONE	997	7	16.4
BOX BUTTE	595	18	81.9
BOYD	541	11	42.9
BROWN	368	8	60.2
BUFFALO	1380	18	42.5
BURT	930	13	37.0
BUTLER	1315	29	58.9
CASS	1137	20	46.4
CEDAR	1435	16	19.4
CHASE	395	2	14.9
CHERRY	624	12	34.2
CHEYENNE	709	8	27.3
CLAY	752	5	17.9
COLFAX	964	10	31.9
CUMING	1470	20	32.7
CUSTER	1699	22	35.1
DAKOTA	461	2	9.8
DAWES	488	11	62.9
DAWSON	1263	21	41.1
DEUEL	298	5	45.6
DIXON	932	15	34.4
DODGE	1265	19	32.9
DOUGLAS	509	-18	-64.5
DUNDY	382	6	37.3
FILLMORE	960	9	30.4
FRANKLIN	674	12	54.2
FRONTIER	524	1	7.2
FURNAS	743	21	77.5
GAGE	1561	3	5.0
GARDEN	399	8	60.0
GARFIELD	277	6	67.9
GOSPER	365	1	10.3
GRANT	53	0	10.8
GREELEY	494	4	17.1
HALL	926	5	12.4
HAMILTON	974	5	12.6
HARLAN	528	5	31.0
HAYES	323	3	21.5
HITCHCOCK	504	8	41.1
HOLT	1297	13	23.5
HOOKER	64	3	67.6

County	Estimated Number of Farms in 1969	Estimated Number of Farmer Replacement Opportunities Annually	Persent of 17 year-old Rural Males for whom opportunities may exist
HOWARD	878	20	60.1
JEFFERSON	1010	21	73.8
JOHNSON	765	14	59.5
KEARNEY	667	5	22.2
KEITH	425	8	51.9
KEYA PAHA	260	4	64.1
KIMBALL	307	-1	-4.7
KNOX	1645	31	44.6
LANCASTER	1522	13	23.9
LINCOLN	1102	16	34.8
LOGAN	151	3	53.3
LOUP	169	3	37.5
MCPHERSON	154	6	142.2
MADISON	1206	20	44.8
MERRICK	758	4	14.2
MORRILL	651	13	41.4
NANCE	638	11	42.7
NEMAHA	773	8	34.8
NUCKOLLS	735	3	12.4
OTOE	1212	10	21.7
PAWNEE	725	14	55.9
PERKINS	540	9	37.8
PHELPS	725	11	44.2
PIERCE	1165	27	56.6
PLATTE	1439	22	35.9
POLK	887	12	41.9
RED WILLOW	538	3	16.6
RICHARDSON	1044	13	34.4
ROCK	228	1	13.5
SALINE	1204	19	55.7
SARPY	532	9	42.7
SAUNDERS	1645	21	35.4
SCOTTSBLUFF	1209	6	9.4
SEWARD	1263	24	79.5
SHERIDAN	666	2	7.5
SHERMAN	665	5	15.2
SIOUX	367	3	18.4
STANTON	879	14	40.8
THAYER	891	7	22.0
THOMAS	105	6	96.5
THURSTON	677	9	41.9
VALLEY	667	10	37.2
WASHINGTON	1009	20	54.3
WAYNE	948	5	12.5
WEBSTER	606	1	4.0
WHEELER	187	3	38.5
YORK	1157	19	45.4
STATE TOTAL	71,145	951	34.9

EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURE IN DETERMINING ESTIMATED REPLACEMENT FARMER OPPORTUNITIES

The County Survey of Farmer Replacement Needs for each county was completed by Douglas Genereux and was based upon the 1964 United Stated Census of Agriculture. The primary objective of this survey was to provide the most up-to-date information available concerning the annual need for replacement farmers in each county. A secondary objective was to estimate the percentage of the 17 year old farm youth in your county needed as replacement farmers each year. Other pertinent agricultural data has been included in the information.

The major part of the data used was taken directly from the 1964 Census. For purposes of clarification, the various estimates were computed in the following manner:

1. The estimated number of farms in the county in 1969: The percentage decrease in number of farms for the five year period 1959-1964 was obtained using the census data. This percentage figure was then applied to the number of farms in 1964 to obtain the decrease in number of farms during the period 1964-1969.

2. The estimated average annual decrease in farm numbers anticipated, 1964-1969, was obtained by dividing the estimated decrease in farm numbers during 1964-1969 by five.

3. The estimated number of farm operators who will die or retire each year during 1960-1970: it was assumed that one-half of the farm operators between 55 and 64 years of age and all of the operators over 65 years of age would either die or retire within a ten-year period. This number was divided by ten to yield the annual figure.

4. The estimated number of farm operators who will leave the farm to take up other employment each year between 1960 and 1970 was computed by multiplying the number of farm operators 54 years of age and younger by 1.5 percent.

No census information concerning the percentage of farm operators leaving the farm annually to enter other occupations was available. The figure of 1.5 percent was purely an estimate. Therefore, if you have more reliable information for your county, it should be used in place of the 1.5 percent estimate.

5. The estimated total number of operators who will leave the farm annually from 1960 to 1970 was computed by adding the number of operators leaving due to death or retirement and the number of operators leaving the farm for other employment.

6. The estimated average number annual replacement farmers needed each year was obtained by subtracting the estimated average annual decrease in farms anticipated from the number of farm operators leaving the farm.

7. The estimated average number of young men 17 years of age on farms was computed by dividing the total number of rural farm males from 10 to 19 years of age by ten to yield the average number of 17 year old farm boys in the county. It was assumed that the number of 17 year old farm boys in the county was reduced during 1964-1969 by the same percentage as farm numbers were reduced.

8. The estimated percentage of 17 year old farm youth needed as replacement farmers was computed by dividing the number of annual replacement farmers needed by the number of 17 year old farm boys in the county.

It should by recognized that the data arrived at by calculations are purely estimates and should be treated as such.